

783 not a real or mystical shadow in our sense of the term, but an evil and contagious force conceptualized, on the analogy of a shadow, as an invisible
753 counterpart of certain conditions. The sources of 'shadow' are such conditions or events as death, activities connected with human reproduction, including sex intercourse, the early stages of pregnancy, birth of twins, miscarriage (regarded as death), women during confinement, irregular appearance of the teeth, e.g. upper incisor before lower or molar before incisor. 'Shadow' is accordingly connected with many of the same kind of irregularities as generate 'heat', but it appears to be differentiated as an independent concept for the purpose of dealing with its effects on the health of people who are peculiarly susceptible to defilement.

763 Precautions are taken to protect the sick against the influence of *muridi*.
758 A sick person is smeared with medicines or quarantined like a new-born
834 child by means of a medicated stick placed across the entrance to his hut to warn off carriers of 'shadow' and counteract the 'shadow' of anyone unaware of his condition. If there is an epidemic in a village and the general vitality and resistance consequently are lowered, people may be told to refrain from sex intercourse lest *muridi* make the illness worse. In the smallpox epidemic of 1938 people cohabiting were said to have the disease in a worse form than others. When a child is ill, its parents refrain from sex intercourse. A warrior who slept with his wife the night before battle would be easy prey to the enemy. A man sleeping with his wife may not approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced nor help skin it without first smearing his hands with (usually cooling) medicine, lest *muridi* affect the meat and cause stomach trouble (*makhumo*) to those eating it.
[826] Children whose teeth appear irregularly (*leshaga*) are full of *muridi* and were killed in the old days. But today they are treated by a doctor and have to be careful never to bite others, for the wound will not heal and there is always difficulty in obtaining the necessary antidote, namely, scrapings from the teeth of the *leshaga*. Cross-roads and river fords are secondary sources of *muridi* since the 'shadow' carried by unsuspecting hosts infects these places. For this reason pregnant women are not supposed to go on long journeys from home.
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783 *Muridi* is a much more limited concept than 'heat'; it is invoked mainly
753 to account for the aggravation of illness or the susceptibility to illness or other injury of persons contacting defilement. It does not affect the country generally, and it furnishes an alternative to witchcraft as an explanation of the aggravation of ailments or the failure of illnesses to yield to ordinary remedies.

Muridi in a more virulent form is called *leridi* (ominous or menacing shadow), which infects a warrior who has killed an enemy and who is in grave danger of becoming mad or very quarrelsome unless purified. An allied concept is that of *letala* (sinister track) derived from the idea that, if a woman is cohabiting with two men one of whom gets ill, the track of the other, should he approach near or within earshot of the sick person, will